

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A tampon applicator comprising:

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a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one substantially flattened surface with at least one gripping structure other than a rib, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one substantially flattened surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

2. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said fingergrip area comprises at least one pair of diametrically opposed, substantially flattened surfaces.

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3. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said fingergrip area comprises an odd number of substantially flattened surfaces, and wherein at least one of said substantially flattened surfaces is diametrically opposed to a pair of adjoined substantially flattened surfaces.

4. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said fingergrip area further comprises at least two angled shoulder surfaces.

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a5 / 5. The tampon applicator of claim 4, wherein said at least one substantially flattened surface is at least two substantially flattened surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces corresponds to a separate one of said substantially flattened surfaces on said fingergrip area.

6. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure is selected from the group consisting of: embossments, protuberances other than ribs, slits, grooves, louvers, perforations, lances, abrasive media, high wet coefficient of friction material, pressure sensitive adhesive, and any combinations thereof.

7. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure is raised above said at least one substantially flattened surface.

8. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure is depressed below said at least one substantially flattened surface.

9. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure is aligned with an outer surface of said at least one substantially flattened surface.

10. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure has a position selected from the group consisting of: tilted towards an outer surface, tilted away from an outer surface, and any combination thereof, of said at least one substantially flattened surface.

11. The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said fingergrip area and said plunger have substantially the same cross-sectional shape.

12. The tampon applicator of claim 11, wherein said cross-sectional shape is selected from the group consisting of: rectangular, square, triangular, or hexagonal.

Sub 13. A tampon applicator comprising:
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a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a finger grip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said finger grip area having at least one convex surface with at least one gripping structure other than a rib, wherein said finger grip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one convex surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

14. The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said finger grip area comprises at least one pair of diametrically opposed, convex surfaces.

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CONT

15. The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said fingergrip area comprises an odd number of convex surfaces, and wherein at least one of said convex surfaces is diametrically opposed to a pair of adjoined convex surfaces.

16. The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said fingergrip area further comprises at least two angled shoulder surfaces.

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17. The tampon applicator of claim 16, wherein said at least one convex surface is at least two convex surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces corresponds to a separate one of said convex surfaces on said fingergrip area.

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18. The tampon applicator of claim 13, wherein said at least one gripping structure is selected from the group consisting of: embossments, protuberances other than ribs, slits, grooves, louvers, perforations, lances, abrasive media, high wet coefficient of friction materials, pressure sensitive adhesives, and any combinations thereof.

19. A tampon applicator comprising:

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a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one concave surface with at least one gripping structure other than a rib, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one concave surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

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20. The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said fingergrip area comprises at least one pair of diametrically opposed, concave surfaces.

21. The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said fingergrip area comprises an odd number of concave surfaces, and wherein at least one of said concave surfaces is diametrically opposed to a pair of adjoining concave surfaces.

22. The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said fingergrip area further comprises at least two angled shoulder surfaces.

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23. The tampon applicator of claim 22, wherein said at least one concave surface is at least two concave surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces corresponds to a separate one of said concave surfaces on said fingergrip area.

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24. The tampon applicator of claim 19, wherein said at least one gripping structure is selected from the group consisting of: embossments, protuberances other than ribs, slits, grooves, louvers, perforations, lances, abrasive media, high wet coefficient of friction materials, pressure sensitive adhesives, and any combinations thereof.